

Idaho System of Care

"Building on Each Other's Strengths"

Newsletter

Volume 1, Issue 2, Summer 2005



Dance Circle at System of Care Conference

Working Out Wraparound

"We have a great plan. It's time to put it into action," said Decker Sanders, project manager for "Building on Each Other's Strengths," Idaho System of Care.

Local council service coordinators (LCSCs) met in Boise July 15 to work on Business Practice Model/ Wraparound implementation. Coordinators examined the evaluation forms for the business practice model. Dr. Rick Phillips facilitated the process.

Major Steps of Business Practice Model

- Step 1- Identification
- Step 2- Orientation
- Step 3- Suitability Assessment
- Step 4- Develop a Support Team
- Step 5- Goal Setting/Planning

Coordinators modified evaluation forms to ensure a strength-based approach for each family. By modifying the forms, they identified the need for an orientation packet, questions measuring cultural competency, and identification of families for Wraparound.

Questions such as "What is Family Voice and Choice" and "How Do You Transition Council Families to the Wraparound" triggered rich discussions. Local council service coordinators expressed positive feelings about the approach.

"I like the council coordinator role because it brings creativity and flexibility," said Travis Turley, Region 4 LCSC. "It is an opportunity to identify family needs instead of simply telling families about services."

Roles of local council service coordinators and regional and local councils were further defined at the System of Care leadership meeting, July 26-27, in Boise.

(continued on page 2)



Dr. Rick Phillips and Travis Turley

Connecting
Communities
for
Children



Building on Each Other's Strengths

(continued from page 1)

More than 50 people from child-serving agencies, Federation of Families, parents and community members attended the successful, two-day meeting.

Participants examined council charters and discussed how they fit with the business practice model/Wraparound process. In addition, participants identified a "parent friendly" title for local council service coordinators — **Wraparound Specialists**. Roles identified for the system of care include:

Regional Councils

- Administer flex funds
- Communicate community successes and policy recommendations.

Wraparound Specialists (formerly LCSCs)

- Work as a Regional Resource
- Use Wraparound evidence-based practice

Local Councils

- Identify community resources
- Decrease stigma
- Increase community capacity

Watch your weekly council update e-mail for the meeting minutes.

What is a System of Care?

Services and support coordinated to help parents of a child with Serious Emotional Disturbances develop an effective care plan — with the assistance of individuals chosen by the family — that is tailored to the needs of the child and locally administered.

stigma surrounding mental health disorders. They decided to increase public awareness and teach the community about mental health.

How Did They Fight Stigma?

In collaboration with the local school district, regional mental health council, and other community members, youth created a campaign. Strategies included school assemblies, a community fair, and a town hall meeting. More than 300 students, community members, and agency representatives attended these events.

Local businesses provided discounts on various goods and services to students. Students can cash in on incentives by presenting their student identification card with a "CLUES" sticker.

CLUES means:

- **Connect**
- **Listen**
- **Understand**
- **Express**
- **Seek Help**

The campaign is successful. More people are asking for help through the mental health council, and students are cashing in on the CLUES stickers.

"The most rewarding part," says McCurdy, "is watching parents become involved as advocates."

Local Campaign Featured at National Symposium

"We really care about our kids," said Cynthia McCurdy, Chairwoman of the Region 7 Children's Mental Health Council. Their public awareness campaign is all about caring for youth.

McCurdy and Communications Coordinator Chandra Story presented the campaign during the National Rural Mental Health Symposium. "Friends Helping Friends" was created by a group of young people concerned about



Region 7 Chairwoman Cynthia McCurdy

ICCMH Update

Idaho Law HB378 places the Idaho Council for Children's Mental Health (ICCMH) as governing body for the Idaho System of Care, "Building on Each Other's Strengths."

The ICCMH is invited to provide an Idaho System of Care status report to the Joint Finance and Appropriations Committee during the 2006 legislative session. This report will include progress on the Jeff D. Court implementation plan.

Read the law at <http://www3.state.id.us/oasis/H0378.html>.



A Parent's Story

Like so many parents-turned-advocates, Angela Hicks' dedication to helping children with serious emotional disturbances and their families is rooted in her own personal experience of needing help and not knowing where to get it.

Angela has two sons. The youngest one showed signs of emotional and behavioral problems almost from birth. By the time the boy was old enough to attend school, his behavior had become a real source of concern.

In school he frequently was reprimanded for disruptive behavior, and Angela felt he was perceived to be a "bad" kid by his classmates and teachers.

Living in a small town in Idaho, Angela has few resources to draw upon to help her understand what was going on with her son. It was not until he was hospitalized after a psychotic episode at age seven that he was diagnosed as bipolar with attention deficit hyperactive disorder (ADHD).

Two more episodes over the next nine months prompted the family's insurance company to drop their coverage, leaving Angela responsible for more than \$90,000 in medical bills.

Angela Hicks is co-chair of the Region 5 Children's Mental Health Council. Read the rest of her story on the Idaho System of Care web site, www.idahosystemofcare.org.

*As told to Marshall Brezonick
PBZ Communications*



Update on Parent Participation

By Decker Sanders, Project Manager

Regional chairs were asked to provide clarification around reimbursement and honoraria for council members. According to Idaho law — <http://www3.state.id.us/oasis/H0378.htm> — volunteers may receive reimbursement for actual expenses incurred, such as travel. Honoraria are not allowed for volunteers, only for parents who are council members or invited to participate in System of Care work groups.

While volunteers are one of the most valuable resources in our communities, there is no policy or authorization to provide honoraria, stipend, or reimbursement of associated costs to volunteers other than parents.

The Department of Health and Welfare and the State Department of Education have policies related to the provision of monetary reimbursement for costs **parents** incur to participate in agency-sponsored meetings and work groups. Policies address parents only.

Parents may request honoraria and reimbursement for identified costs if they are not receiving support from other sources, i.e., continue to receive their salary while participating, receive supports from other organizations for participation, etc.

Effective July 1, 2005, until an approved statewide policy on parent involvement is adopted by the ICCMH for councils, honoraria provided to parents for approved participation in councils is limited to \$75. Reimbursements for costs identified in agency policies are governed by the agency's fiscal policies (costs for travel, childcare, lodging, per diem, etc.).

A subcommittee of council members is examining policies on parent participation. Angela Hicks, Region 5 co-chair, heads the subcommittee. Policy recommendations will go to the Idaho Council for Children's Mental Health. For more information, contact Decker Sanders, Project Manager, sandersd@idhw.state.id.us or (208) 334-6960.

Save the Dates!

- **August 23** — Training on ADHD, classroom behavioral interventions, and non-verbal learning disorders in Region 7. Contact: **Tricia Danielson, Onieda Local Council Chair**, (208) 766-2841 or tricia@sffaudio.com.



Family Support Specialists Working Across the State

*By Trish Wheeler, Key Family Contact
Idaho Federation of Families*

Advocates for families of children and youth with Serious Emotional Disturbances (SED) are available in most areas of Idaho. The expanded Family Support Specialist (FSS) program from the Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health will provide advocates in all parts of the state.

Introducing Family Support Specialists

Lisa Rivera (Northern Panhandle) and Nikki Tangen (Treasure Valley) established themselves as advocates and community organizers. They facilitate peer-to-peer support groups and provide a variety of other advocacy, support and outreach services.

Francis Buker serves the Lewiston area, and Kristin Howell serves the Idaho Falls/Pocatello area. All Family Support Specialists (FSS) are parents or foster parents of children affected by SED, familiar with the challenges and frustrations that go along with it.

Working For Families

Well-trained by staff from the Federation, Department of Health and Welfare, Education, and Juvenile Justice, Specialists are compiling a Directory of Providers and other resources in their respective areas.

This will help families find services in their areas while identifying service gaps and needs. They also are working directly with families on a variety of advocacy and education issues, as well as operating or starting peer support groups in their area.

Family Support Specialists will be able to attend Local Council sessions at the invitation of families appearing before Councils, not as Council members

Recruitment is ongoing for the Pocatello, Twin Falls, and Caldwell areas, as well as a tribal FSS. Contact the Family Support Specialist in your area at the Idaho Federation of Families, 1-800-905-3436.



Kathryn Gillenwater, Youth Coordinator

Involving Our Youth!

By Kathryn Gillenwater, Youth Coordinator

For the first time, our May 2005 conference included a youth track. Youth across the state of Idaho attended classes such as stress relieving techniques, questions for mental health professionals, communication approaches, and an art project to unmask one's real identity.

The success of the youth track wasn't measured in attendance or classes, but in the effect in each youth. One young man said, "That's right, I am not ADHD. I am Tony",* reinforcing the fact that mental disorders do

not consume the whole individual's dreams and hopes.

It is so rewarding to see each youth leave more empowered, more encouraged, and more effective to be mentally healthy. I can't wait to do it again next year. Don't wait a year to get involved, join in the fun now.

To find out how you, or a youth you know and love, can participate contact me at 1-800-905-3436 or

kgillenwater@idffcmh.org.

*name changed

Calling All Youth!

Learn to share yourself through art while keeping your heart clear and your mind healthy.

"Art from the Heart" classes for ages 8-14 are being held statewide. They allow children affected by Serious Emotional Disturbances (SED) to express themselves through artwork and poetry.

Materials created may become part of "The World through our Eyes." This art display will begin at the State Capitol in November-December, and travel throughout the state in 2006. The purpose is to decrease stigma for families and children affected by SED..



Deadline for submitting artwork is **September 30**. To find out when a "Art from the Heart" class is coming to your area, or to send in art for the display, contact the Federation of Families, 1-800-905-3436 or kgillenwater@idffcmh.org. Reimbursement for postage is available.

Developing Cultural Competency

By Chandra Story, Cultural Competency Lead

Developing a culturally competent system of care is no easy task, but the statewide diversity team is taking on the challenge.

This team is assessing cultural needs while examining our system policies and practices to see how we can include and better serve families in Idaho. Part of the experience is also learning about their cultures. The team is using this information to develop a plan.

Team Representatives are from the Idaho Hispanic Commission, Tribal Coordinating Council, Children's Mental Health Councils, child-serving agencies, and the Idaho Office of Refugees.

"We must learn about ourselves as we learn about the other," says Sam Byrd, a diversity consultant in Boise. "We all live within multiple cultures. Perhaps cultural fluency is a better term than competency — we are always learning."

An example of the team's learning experience is the new position for Tribal Family support specialist. They will provide education for Native American families seeking and receiving public services for mental health-related issues.

According to Trish Wheeler, key family contact for the Federation of Families, it just makes sense. "I really did not think about it until I joined the diversity team. A family support specialist specifically for the tribes will help us build bridges and become more culturally competent."

Once drafted, the proposed statewide cultural competency plan will be submitted to the Idaho Council for Children's Mental Health for review.



"We must learn about ourselves as we learn about the other. We all live within multiple cultures. Perhaps cultural fluency is a better term than competency — we are always learning."

Sam Byrd

Training for Law Enforcement Officers

Law enforcement officers all over the state can earn continuing education credit for learning about mental health.

The training session — approved by the Peace Officers Academy — provides information on mental health issues. Topics include:

- **Personal responses to mental disorders in children and youth;**
- **Warning signs of mental illness;**
- **Problem-solving techniques;**
- **How to talk with parents about mental health concerns;**
- **How to make referrals to mental health professionals; and**
- **Knowing who to contact.**

In addition, a cultural competency module is part of the curriculum. Law enforcement officers are encouraged to examine the many layers of culture in their area and their own response to cultural differences.

This interactive training includes a training video for law enforcement officers, and is in collaboration with Better Today's, Better Tomorrow's (formerly Red Flags Idaho), Idaho State University. The training is based on a police pocket guide created by parents in Massachusetts. Evaluations from the pilot training in Sandpoint, Idaho were very positive.

Copies of the guide will be available as part of the fall 2005 training sessions. To obtain a copy of the police pocket guide and learn more about training, contact Oscar Morgan at morgano@idhw.state.id.us.



*Ann Kirkwood, Project Director
Better Today's, Better Tomorrow's*



*Top: Class Participants.
Bottom: Dr. Oscar Morgan.*

From the Editor

Entries for regional success stories are needed. Please obtain permission from families to share their story.

For confidentiality purposes, do not use the real names of family members when submitting a story.

Send submissions by September 15 to Chandra Story at:

storyc@idhw.state.id.us



BUILDING ON EACH OTHER'S STRENGTHS.

Idaho Department of Health and Welfare
Division of Family and Community
Services
450 W. State Street, 5th Floor
Boise, ID 83720-0036